

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**ENTANGLEMENT IN IRAQ**

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## ABSTRACT

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Whatever one's view of the unilateral military action intervention in Iraq, and despite the fact that no weapons of mass destruction have been found, still the Iraqi people had been living in fear, poor economy, turbulence, and repression. Now the incompetent dictator has been removed for ever, and the Iraqi people have been given the chance to start a new life. Iraq is home to several ethnicities, ideologies, and sects. A unified Iraq, with its entire ethnic and religious populations, can build a prosperous democratic state and a new regime away from segregation. Effective post-Saddam strategy will require long-term resources of money and expertise. Multinational support for the new regime is important, especially with its difficult agendas and multiple social groups.



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## ENTANGLEMENT IN IRAQ

Operation Desert Storm ended in 1991, and was thought to end the conflict between Iraq and US-led coalition forces. Furthermore, in the years subsequent the Gulf war, there has been continuing limited force used against Iraq by the US and its allies, as well as sanctions and prolonged inspections for weapons of mass destruction and missile programs.

What made the US and UK carry out military action in Iraq without United Nations (UN) Security Council approval, international agreement or domestic support, and despite the disapproval of some countries of the United Nation Security Council members, such as, China, Russia, and France, which abandoned this plan and thought it too rigid? This question is spinning in many people's minds these days, as they seek to know the precise reason.

In 2002, the Bush administration made several statements about Iraq, and most of these statements were regarding stockpiles of WMD in Iraq. In spite of UN searching and hunting, no WMD were found to exist. Scott Ritter, senior weapons inspector in Iraq from 1991 to 1998, stated, "Iraq has been required to declare and eliminate its capability to produce chemical weapons, and indeed to eliminate its stockpile of chemical weapons. This has been achieved."<sup>1</sup> The Saddam Hussein regime was linked to terrorism, in the opinion of the Bush administration. Up until now, there is no hard evidence that Iraq was involved in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, even though they did not show any understanding after the fact. There is no evidence the Saddam regime had any connection with the radical Islamist Bin Laden.

The Saddam regime was neither an Islamist one nor Muslim one; it was mainly a nationalist regime. No hard evidence yet has surfaced to prove that Saddam supported radical Islamist terrorism. Nevertheless, the Saddam regime was disaster enough for Iraq. Through out his regime, he was a barbaric tyrant, and there was no visible hope that he was going to change. There are much evidence and many clear records about Saddam violating human rights, including the use of chemical weapons against civilian life.

Dictators don't last forever, yet they always been around. Most of the worst dictators are dead now, like Stalin and Hitler, but there are still many modern dictators like Saddam Hussein around. Hopefully though, this will not continue forever. The Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein, during his 24 presidential years, has driven Iraqis into exile unknown places, expanded his power by eliminating all political opposition, and transformed the country into a regional hegemon by spending heavily on the military. In fact, in 1991, Iraq military defence was measured the world's fourth largest. Beside the militarism was the program to develop weapons of mass destruction. Recently, millions of people have been liberated, and now is the



chance for the Iraqi people to achieve democracy and stability that were never seen under the past regime.

## **BACKGROUND**

In July 1990, Iraq demanded that Kuwait redraw the border and reduce oil production. In August 1990, Iraqi forces invaded the state of Kuwait, bringing immediate condemnation from the United Nations, along with demands to withdraw. Iraq refused to withdraw and formally annexed the state of Kuwait. In January 1991, the US and a coalition, backed by UN resolutions, went to war to oust Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Coalition forces liberated Kuwait after a very heavy bombardment and pushed into Iraqi territory. The Iraqis accepted a peace deal that required them to get rid of any WMD program.

The sanctions forced by the UN have resulted in both harmful and helpful impacts since 1991. UN resolution 687 required Iraq to remove or destroy their weapons of mass destruction, recognize Kuwait sovereignty and the border demarcations, pay war reparations, and return all property taken by Iraq during the invasion.<sup>2</sup> While Iraq slowly worked toward fulfilling this requirement, it did not achieve the UN's desired endstate. Iraq's economy deteriorated very sharply during sanctions and the country's people suffered from shortages of medicine and malnutrition. Another UN mandate was the "oil for food" program, which permitted Iraq to export limited oil to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, two wars and tough international embargos that destroyed the economy resulted from Saddam Hussein's misrule. The country's economy struggled and went through a huge downfall, which resulted in hungry people, miserable families, unemployment, insufficient water supplies, and unhealthy conditions.

While the US hoped that these sanctions would lead to the downfall of Saddam Hussein's regime, they appear not to have had that effect. UNICEF has estimated that at least 4,500 Iraqi children were dying monthly as result of the sanctions.<sup>4</sup> The sanctions brought misery to the Iraqi people but did not loosen the Ba'athist tyranny. However, the embargo caused oil exports to fall to one tenth of pre-war levels, from 3.5 million barrels per day (bb/d) in July 1990 to around 0.3 million bb/d in July 1991.<sup>5</sup> The lack of Iraqi oil export revenue did reduce Saddam Hussein's ability to rebuild his severely damaged military and WMD program, and hence, reduced his ability to threaten neighbouring countries within the region.

Iraqi troops killed thousands of uprising Shiites in southern cities of Iraq and also Kurds in northern cities during an ethnic cleansing campaign immediately after cessation of international hostilities. Saddam Hussein's regime imprisoned, tortured, and gassed the Iraqi people inside

the country. As the Iraqi people have been suffering for a long time, the bonds of society have become so dented over the years that the Iraqi people don't know whom to trust. The soul of the people has been so damaged by decades of mass murder and terror, that many do not even trust their next-door neighbours. The Iraqi people may have reached a stage where they cannot think politically.

Saddam's regime had been a tyrannical one. When he became president in 1979, he had cared about nothing but his own political greed. He maintained mass propaganda to convince his own people that he was their defender and planted in his people's mind that he was their only help. Saddam abused political power in similar ways to Hitler and Joseph Stalin. When President Bush said "We are dealing with Hitler revisited," he was referring to Saddam behaving similarly to the way Hitler did, to convince his people his intents were good.<sup>6</sup>

However, in late 1998, the country of Iraq once again faced the prospect of US and British forces conducting more bombing against targets in the country.<sup>7</sup> Saddam refused to let UN inspectors search presidential palaces for weapons of mass destruction, and the UN inspectors were withdrawn.

Iraq still not regained recovery from the 1991 war, where they received the heaviest bombing in world history.<sup>8</sup> The US was instrumental in preventing the UN from lifting the sanctions.<sup>9</sup> US officials stated that sanctions would remain, even if Iraq complied with UN inspections.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the situation continued to deteriorate, and on March 2003, the Bush administration ordered missile attacks on Baghdad in an attempt to kill Saddam directly.<sup>11</sup>

#### **US STRATEGY PLAN SINCE (1991-2003).**

US policy towards Iraq since 1991 has faced many criticisms. Most of the criticisms focus on an individual element of policy, ignoring how that policy instrument works in combination with other elements. Thus sanctions, inspections, or other instruments are individually denounced as failures even though they contributed in a variety of ways to achieving overall US objectives. Moreover, many assessments do not address the range of policy goals that the US has for the region. Political sages routinely describe US policy as a failure due to Saddam's survival, even though Iraq since 1991 has not successfully menaced its neighbours, a singular achievement. The US has accomplished the most important task in keeping Saddam's Iraq contained. Because of the US military presence, sanctions, and other measures, Saddam has not been able to attack any neighbouring country or other US allies. Consider that the Iraq WMD program had met with less success, and the most ambitious objective-removing Saddam from

power has occurred. The US has made these limited gains without jeopardizing the stability of the region, another impressive achievement.<sup>12</sup>

Both regional military presence and sanctions have contributed to successful containment. Sanctions, however, did not achieve more ambitious goals. The Iraqi opposition and weapons inspections have made only marginal contributions. For all of these instruments, however, their true contributions must be understood in the context of overall US policy rather than in isolation. In spite of the generally optimistic US record, significant room for progress remains. Unfortunately, it appears that much of the credit for the limited US successes is due to Saddam's missteps rather than to skilled US diplomacy and planning by the US. In retrospect, it appears that the US wrongly emphasized weapons inspections and other elements of the original containment scheme despite their declining utility. The US and its regional allies, remain vital to US policy success, are often at odds over various policy instruments and their implementations. However, US domestic viewpoints (e.g., the will of the American people) reduce policy makers flexibility. Finally, the US does not appear to have a long-term plan for the region.<sup>13</sup>

## **US GOALS**

The main US goal towards Iraq was to prevent any Iraqi regional aggression towards other Gulf States and US in generally. Because Iraq remained committed to becoming a regional hegemon despite its defeat in the first Gulf War, the US established a strong military presence in the region to deter and, if necessary, defeat any further Iraqi aggression. To demonstrate its commitment, the US augmented its forces during crisis and at times used military strike.<sup>14</sup>

Another key element of containment was keeping both conventional and unconventional military forces weak, in addition to stopping the Iraqis WMD program, and removing Saddam from power. Another regional objective, preventing the spread of regional stability, has also guided US actions. The relative priority of these goals shifted as the decade wore on, with concern about Iraqi's WMD programs and an emphasis on changing the regime in Iraq rising in importance, relative to the goals of containing Iraq to preserve regional stability. Although the conventional military threat remained an important concern, the US increasingly focused on the Iraqi WMD program. Given Saddam's unrelenting hostility toward the US and regional allies, both in the Gulf and Israel, the US was alarmed about Saddam's possession of these weapons, which have the capability to kill hundreds of thousands of people if used. During various crisis

points after 1997, US administration spokespeople continued to emphasize Iraqi WMD programs as their justification for confrontation.<sup>15</sup>

US policy focused on Saddam himself as well as the broader danger that a powerful Iraq posed to the region. At the end of the Gulf War in 1991, coalition leaders assumed that the combination of military defeat and internal unrest would lead to the fall of the Saddam regime. Beginning then, the US has used a range of instruments to remove Saddam from power. For many years after the Gulf war, the US tried to instigate a coup in Iraq. The US also used military strikes to discredit Saddam and weaken regime protection forces. Policy makers also hoped that sanctions would foster unrest in popular opinion and among the elite, further destabilizing the regime.<sup>16</sup>

During recent years, the Iraqi resistance was viewed as the most important instrument for removing Saddam from power. The Clinton administration was committed to working with the Iraqi opposition to topple the regime, even as it continued to contain Iraq. In November 1998, President Clinton embraced the opposition, promising to work for “new government” in Iraq. However, lack of commitment of the American people and opposition from major powers and allies in the region led the US to avoid directly involving US ground troops or aiding the Iraqi opposition in any effort that would require a major US commitment. Policy more reliant on the Iraqi opposition would need to depend heavily on regional allies, who would have been needed to provide bases, training, and help for opposition fighters.<sup>17</sup>

However, the US administration was concerned that their presence and any action required to contain Iraq or overthrow Saddam might decrease stability across the region. The sanctions were out of favour, as were many military strikes. In response, regional governments at times criticized US policy, withheld necessary support, or otherwise distanced themselves from the US. Over time, US policy makers have recognized a tension between the use of force and the stability of US allies. Large force increases and the regular use of force against the Iraqi regime angered many radicals in the region, threatening the stability of US allies and the lives of US military personnel and citizens.<sup>18</sup>

The US also sought to keep Iraq stable. There is little love across Iraq’s tribal confederation, different religious communities, and ethnic groups. Iraqi national identity is weak in comparison to religious or tribal identity, and the collapse of the center could lead to complete disaster in the state. Moreover, Saddam had devastated Iraqi civil society, destroying any independent organization and severing ties among citizens. Recently, retired General Zinni, former Commander of US Central Command, testified that, should Saddam fall, dozens of

opposition groups might compete for power, destabilizing Iraq, and threatening regional stability.<sup>19</sup>

The US also implemented some policy instruments in order to prevent radical Shiah from dominating a post Saddam Iraq. The US has long worried that a growth of Shiah influence would lead Iraq to tilt toward Iran, support other Shiites abroad, or both.<sup>20</sup>

As a result from these fears, policy makers hesitated to support efforts that might destabilize Iraq or lead to collapse. It hesitated to support popular resistance to Saddam in the immediate aftermath of Desert Storm. In addition, for most of the 1990s, the US has preferred an internal coup as a means of regime change, as this would be more likely to leave a strong government than would other methods. Overall US policy in Iraq must be considered successful, since it resulted in containing Iraq. Moreover, as a result of sanctions and the overwhelming victory of the Gulf War, Iraq is far weaker than it was in 1990<sup>21</sup>.

However, maximum US goals were not met. Saddam survived several coup attempts since the 1991 Gulf War along with at least two tribal revolts. Moreover, the Iraqi opposition did not succeed. Based in the original US goals, however the US scored a remarkable achievement and Iraq has not invaded its neighbors; moreover it remains militarily weak.<sup>22</sup>

### **THE INVASION OF IRAQ (2003)**

“Saddam Hussein must disarm himself or for the sake of peace, we will lead a coalition to disarm him,” said, President, George Bush.<sup>23</sup>

On March 17, 2003 the President commenced war against Iraq.<sup>24</sup>

With that war now over, the major question now is about the confusion of the American public. Some people claim that the war was never about WMD, but was an excuse to bring democracy to Iraq or the entire Middle East. Others say it was because of the heartbreaking events of 9/11. Furthermore, some question whether the Bush administration misled the US people on its rationale on going to war.

Additionally, the US is still struggling over the question of whether the CIA and other intelligence sources were mistaken about Iraq WMD, which was the primary justification given to the public for going to war against Iraq.

In October 2002, David Kay summarized in his findings that Iraq had preserved some of its technological nuclear capability from before the 1991 Gulf War. However, there was no evidence that suggested that Saddam had undertaken any significant steps after 1998 towards reconstituting a program to build nuclear weapons. David Kay's findings stated, “We have not

uncovered evidence that Iraq undertook significant post-1998 steps to actually build nuclear weapons or produce fissile material.”<sup>25</sup>

However, President Bush stated, “[Iraq] is building more long range missiles so that it can inflict mass death throughout the region,”<sup>26</sup> But David Kay’s findings revealed that his inspection efforts did not uncover any evidence to corroborate these claims.

The former head of the United Nations weapons inspections team, Hans Blix, who headed the UN inspection team from 2000 to mid-2003, said, the indications suggested capability, American and British persistently read, “exist”.<sup>27</sup> “So they created facts where there were no facts,” said, Blix.<sup>28</sup> He also added that inspectors would not have gained entry into Iraq in late 2002 without US military pressure, but he added, “Men such as Vice President [Dick] Cheney, Defence Secretary [Donald] Rumsfeld, and his deputy [Paul] Wolfowitz, said the inspections were, at best, useless.”<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, “The war was not justified. The US needed weapons of mass destruction to be able to wage the war.”<sup>30</sup>

A Defence Department advisor, Mr. Richard Perle who resigned lately after served seventeen years on the Pentagon’s Advisory Board, and who was considered a major force behind the US decision to invade Iraq, called for reshaping the CIA and the resignation of its director, George Tenet.<sup>31</sup> He also mentioned that Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld is turning the Pentagon’s Advisory Board into high profile institution, he also lashed out at the President of France for trying to gather together European countries against US policy in Iraq.<sup>32</sup>

The row over the Iraq war will not release the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair. Almost 10 months since the end of the Iraq war, his claim of WMD remains unfounded, a dilemma that the British people want Mr Blair to explain.

Instead many subsequent British reports suggest that weapons of mass destruction did not exist.

US Secretary Colin Powell in his most recent clarification to the journalist, stated, “What is the open question: how many stocks they had, if any, and if they had any, where did they go? And if they didn’t have any, why wasn’t that known beforehand. “This consideration is a major downward from his past sharp speech making, when he powerfully insisted Saddam possessed WMDs.”<sup>33</sup>

This WMD issue still needs persuasive explanation in order for the world as well as the US public opinion to appreciate it. This author suspects it is a blend of Iraqi deception and corruption far more extensive than heretofore front assumed. Saddam Hussein’s internal disinformation was sustained by misleading information from the Iraqi scientists for the sake of

cash. Iraqi WMD expert tricked Saddam in order to get funding support, then used it for personnel use. They were misleading Saddam, and he was misleading the world.

#### **BUILDING A DEMOCRACY IN IRAQ.**

“There will be no better signal for the Middle East, or the world than a democratic, prosperous Iraq replacing a tyrannical, brutal dictatorship,” said, British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair.<sup>34</sup>

A regime changed is not an end in itself, but a way to the end of a secure, peaceful, and stable country, as a successful and suitably democratic state. Iraq should be governed by a group representative of all Iraqis, a government that is fully committed to following the rule of law and upholding the rights of all Iraqi people. Iraqis who are committed to establishing a democratic future must be integrally involved in this process of establishing the new government in order for it to succeed. Such an Iraq will be a force for regional stability, rather than conflict, and will be able to participate in the democratic development of the region.<sup>35</sup>

The way of stabilizing, rebuilding, reshaping, preserving the unity, and ultimately democratizing Iraq will require a significant deal by the US and the international community, even those who stood aside and those who opposed military action. It will be necessary for the US military to bear much of the initial responsibility for maintaining stability in Iraq. This encompasses securing its territorial integrity, finding and destroying any WMD, and supporting efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to those in need. For the next year or more, US and coalition troops will have to comprise the largest international military presence in Iraq. But as the security situation permits, authority should be transferred to civilian agencies and to representatives of the Iraqi citizenry. Much of the long-term security presence, as well as resources for reconstruction, will have to come from the US and its allies. International support, cooperation, and participation are required for success.<sup>36</sup>

A stable, peaceful and democratic Iraq is in the interest of the region and the world. Therefore, it is important that the US-led stabilization and rebuilding effort gain the full support and deep involvement of key international organizations in the process of rebuilding Iraq.<sup>37</sup>

The US should be aware that building democracy in Iraq will be harder than what most people expect. The forming of a governing institution in foreign societies, with different cultures and different ethnicities, is formidably complex, especially if it is a unilateral approach. Yet, one-sided nation building seems to be the typical method of US-implemented restructuring following invasion. The US often handpicked individuals who headed such regimes. However, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti are examples for failure. While this approach worked in Japan

(1945-1952), for direct nation building, US deep involvement in the political life of Iraq would probably need to be as deep as the Japanese model to lead to an Iraq capable of influencing its own policy.<sup>38</sup>

It is tempting to attempt to quickly transform a nation from power to legitimacy by supporting elections of local leaders, but this routine assumes a functioning electoral system and the existence of credible, moderate local leaders who have genuine and acceptable political support. In the case of Iraq, a fully open electoral process is very likely to elevate radical religious leaders to power because they have big organization networks and wide-ranging popular support. In other Muslim societies, such as Algeria, early efforts to move to democracy have resulted the rise of extremist Islamist parties and brutal civil order.<sup>39</sup>

Another option is multilateralism. This approach has been implemented in Haiti in 1994 and after the war in Afghanistan in 2001. In these cases, redevelopment was authorized by the UN. In Germany after World War II, redevelopment was undertaken among allies. Even in Japan after World War II, reconstruction was multilateral in form, although unilateral on the ground. Certainly a multilateral approach does not always succeed, as the present political crisis in Haiti demonstrates. Afghanistan another such example, still remains a work in progress.<sup>40</sup>

Yet, multilateralism in nation building has great potential benefits, as UN sanctioned nation building gain more international legitimacy than attempts by a lone intervener. In addition, multilateralism helps share out the costs and manpower more widely. Furthermore, multilateralism helps distribute the negative effect involved in the huge risks of not succeeding. The poor record in the past of unilateral nation building suggests that a UN-led approach is the least risky alternative.<sup>41</sup>

A UN-led effort by no means can assure success. Multilateralism has its weaknesses as well, such as poor coordination and difficult bureaucracy. One should not expect Iraq to be a democratic country in just a little while. This process certainly will be for many years before Iraq can be measured as a democratic state. Iraq under effective new government can begin the process of establishing pluralistic institutions, but in reality, we cannot say today how deep the aspirations for democracy run, other than beyond the educated class, where such yearnings are actually partial. If Iraq were to move on the path of greater democracy and a more representative form of government, Iraqis would have to learn to be citizens in ways that some of their neighbors, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Jordan in particular, have learned over the past decade.<sup>42</sup>



There are substantial indications that there is probably a lasting yearning among many Iraqis for an authoritarian leader who will be able to solve problems, make decisions, and, rapidly get things done. Even without the economic suffering that Iraqis are currently undergoing, many Iraqis probably do support a form of leadership and governance that does not meet US or Western standards of democracy. We should not, for example, assume from reports of widespread anti-Saddam outlooks throughout Iraq, that Iraqis therefore seek a democratic form of government. What they may want is simply a less vicious version of what they recently had. Over time this may change, but we should bear in mind that the Iraq political culture is not like US or Europe.<sup>43</sup>

The US must fully integrate with UN to achieve support. The US should seek to reattach itself to international society. Both the UN and the US must hand-in-hand share in rebuilding Iraq society and establishing a stable form of government. The US should not indeterminately take the lead in post-war Iraq as this will strain relationships with countries whose cooperation is important for the war on terrorism.<sup>44</sup> The US should place its support behind the UN as the legitimate international body to manage the rebuilding Iraq.

#### **THE THREAT OF CONTINUED IRAQ INSTABILITY**

There are many continuing imbalances that need to be mentioned, as political, social, and economic groups struggle over assets to try to build Iraq to the 1980s level of economic well-being. Some groups will want to actively straighten out the accomplishment of the war, but some groups will remain passive and unsettled. By any definition, it will be a confused period in the history.

#### **THE IRAQI GOVERNING COUNCIL.**

Iraq never had Non-Government Organization in the past, which certainly made the task of selecting interim committee members even harder.

The head of Central Command, General John Abizaid, said recently that Iraq would obtain its sovereignty soon and was "not a US dependency,"<sup>45</sup> The official schedule for Iraq to return sovereignty is In June 30, which will allow the intermediary national assembly to select an administrative branch .<sup>46</sup> Two years later, March 2005, Iraq will hold a meeting to draft a new constitutional structure, which will be put to a referendum in December of that year.<sup>47</sup>

#### **AVAILABLE US EXIT STRATEGY**

Most of all, the Iraqi people and their neighbors must understand that the US and its allies are committed to the rebuilding of Iraq, will provide the necessary resources, and will remain as

long as it takes.<sup>48</sup> "As long as necessary," said, President Bush.<sup>49</sup> Any emphasis on early exit strategies and departure deadlines will undercut US credibility and greatly reduce the probability of success.<sup>50</sup>

The situation in Iraq at the moment is a complete mess, with incessant identified terrorism groups, suicide bombing's and so on. Exiting an unstable Iraq in the present time would make the country a breeding ground for more terrorist and more bloodshed. A country without civil control by any means would lead to probable conflicts between different Iraqi tribes, and religious and ethnic groups just like in the former Yugoslavia. In fact Iraq is not far off from the former Yugoslavia in many ways. Furthermore, leaving Iraq, in the unstable situation it is now will not only effect Iraq itself, but also the stability of whole region.

The UN has always had a vital role to play, and it remains the only possible candidate to lead transition. It is about time to hand over the UN control for building Iraq. The UN has always been the accepted source of peace keeping and humanitarian assistance when resolving the consequences of military conflicts and knowledge in the task of building. It has proved its nation credentials in Cambodia, Bosnia, East Timor, and other countries.<sup>51</sup> Franklin Roosevelt never failed to tell the world that the way to achieve global peace and prosperity is thorough international cooperation. Furthermore, there is no credible alternative to rule-based, generally accepted international cooperation.<sup>52</sup>

Even among the Iraqi governing council, there is still broad belief that the involvement of the UN is vital in order to lend legitimacy to Iraq's future.<sup>53</sup>

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

War with Iraq triggered many new discussions indeed. Despite many arguments and poles-apart wonder about the justification of the war and its necessity there is definitely consensus that Saddam was totally not qualified to rule Iraq. Iraqi people definitely are freethinking and have been liberated from a wicked regime, notwithstanding the mess in Iraq at the moment. Yet conflicting opinion remain.

"The real point is that those disagree with the war, disagree fundamentally with the judgment that led to war," said Mr. Tony Blair.<sup>54</sup> If we imagine that the US had listened to Germany and France when they urged restraint, that would have allowed the murderers of Kurds and Arabs a possibility to decide their own setback through political means. This was certainly unworkable, simply because there are many Arab countries in the region having their own complex domestics problems. To some degree, some of those countries are not far off

from Saddam Hussein's former regime, for instance, Syria and Libya. With such disarray, regional Arab pressure on the Baathist regime would have been very difficult to unify.

Let us look around and make out what, and how many changes have been done in some Arab countries since the invasion of Iraq. Syria for example, according to Reuters News Agency, reported on February 5, 2004, from Damascus, that the Human Rights Group has started circulating a lobby via the Internet calling for an end to state-of-emergency laws, requesting Syrian authorities to lift the state of emergency and terminate all associated measures. In response to this matter, Syria without delay released more than 100 political prisoners. It is doubtful that this could happen in Syria before the invasion of Iraq and removal of Saddam from hegemonic control.

This author has the same opinion of the European Council when they said that democracy is not suited Arab countries due to different culture and some other social facts. On the other hand, no one in the Bush administration has ever mentioned that Iraq will have democracy identical to what is in America now. True, they have referred to democracy, but the nature of that democracy in Iraq depends on the Iraqi people. What evolves may be an example of that category of democracy that some countries in the region are already practicing, such as in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar.

That said, more and more countries are turning towards democracy. Who would have imagined that a country like Afghanistan would ever change and would have a constitution, despite of the long history of internal conflicts? Glance at Libya now, and one senses that Libya has changed significantly, or at least, swallowed its pride. Would Kuwait, Bosnia, and now Iraq have been liberated without direct US intervention? The answer to all those question is without doubt, worth reviewing when considering the justification for war in Iraq. For example, in Iraq now they are drafting new constitution and conducting discussions over the form of regime which certainly would not be happening without US invasion

Russia was one of the countries that opposed the war against Iraq, although it didn't used its veto power in the UN Security Council. Currently, we can notice that Russia appears keen to work along with the US to restructure Iraq. According to Reuters News Agency, President Bush and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder met on late February as a step toward putting in place a relationship to bridge the sour divide over the Iraq war. "We talked not about the past. We very much agreed in that. We have to talk about the present and the future now. We both have a great interest in seeing a stable, a democratic Iraq develop," said Schroeder.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, there was a comment by the German Foreign Minister earlier in February in which he called on western allies to initiate a combined Middle East plan.<sup>56</sup>

The invasion of Iraq war was not that terrible; I don't believe it was necessarily a strategic mistake, although the appalling misconduct of postwar planning was. There is no doubt that Saddam was a threat to real stability in the region, and that his removal from power was a great improvement. There is also no doubt that he was truly evil, and that he headed one of the most brutal and savage regimes in the past fifty years. However, despite these positive outcomes, total success for the US in Iraq remains elusive. "No decision I have ever made in politics has been as divisive as the decision to go to war in Iraq," admitted Mr. Tony Blair. "It remains deeply divisive today," he added.<sup>57</sup>

The Bush administration has taken a daring risk, even arguing that no country has ever been as powerful as the US is nowadays.<sup>58</sup> It remains to be seen if the U.S. will transcend the lessons of history in its pursuit of nation building.<sup>59</sup>

WORD COUNT= 5,417



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>4</sup> "No War on Iraq Fact Sheet Human Costs of the 1991 Gulf War and Sanction on Iraq" *Victorian Peace Network*. available from <<http://www.vicpeace.org/meast/iraqwar.html>>; Internet; accessed 5 January 2004.

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<sup>6</sup> "Dead or Alive? Priority Is Dead for Saddam, Claims Agent," *Sydney Morning Herald*, and *Daily Telegraph* (UK), 19 March 2003; [journal on-line]; available from <<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/51/270.html>>; Internet; accessed 7 January 2004.

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen Zunes, "Iraq: 10 years After Gulf War," *Foreign Policy in Focus* 6, no. 1 (January 2001): 1

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Paul West, "First Strike: War Begins with Attack Aimed at Hussein's Top Aides." *The Sun*, March 2003, sec A, p.17.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Byman. "After the Storm: US Policy Toward Iraq Since 1991," *Political science Quarterly* 115, no. 4 (2000): 493.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "Bush Cites Saddam's 'Arsenal of Terror' but War Not 'Imminent,' President Says," *CNN.com/Inside Politics*, 8 October 2002 [journal on-line]; available from <<http://www.cnn.com/2002/allpolitics/10/08/bush.iraq/>>; Internet; accessed 2 December 2003.

<sup>24</sup> David L. Greene, "Unusual Meeting Leads to Decision," *The Sun*, 20 March 2003, sec. A, p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> Dana Priest and Walter Pincus, "Search in Iraq Finds No Banned Weapons; Tenet Assails Panel Leaders' Criticism of Prewar Data," *Washington Post*, 3 October, 2003 [newspaper on-line]; available from <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A35638-2003Oct2?language=printer>>; Internet; accessed 12 January 2004.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

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